

elements [viz., earth, water, fire, and air]; the honey-drops are the five sensual desires [rising from visible form, sound, smell, taste, and touch]; the bee is sin; the fire is disease and old age; and the dragon is death.

“The parable teaches men to be afraid of the causes of misery of birth, old age, disease, and death.”

When the Emperor Shoko had heard the Buddha's sermon, he was full of awe over the causes of misery. And then the Emperor Shoko worshipped the Buddha and said to him: “Now I received your merciful instruction, and I will in the future practise the law.”


“Good and great Emperor,” replied the Buddha, “you practise the law according to my words, and persevere in unshaken endurance on the path of salvation.”

When the Buddha had concluded the words of instruction concerning salvation, Emperor Shoko and the multitude of Buddha's disciples were full of exceeding joy.

THE MIGRATION OF A FABLE.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.

The Reverend D. Hayashi of Toyotsu Mura, Japan, informs us that the Chinese original from which he translated the parable of “The Man in the Well,” is a translation from the Sanskrit which was imported into China by the Buddhist pilgrim Gi-jô about twelve hundred years ago. When Buddhism was introduced into Japan, this Sutra also found its way to the Flowery Kingdom and is there well known. The special interest of this parable consists of the fact that it is known also in Europe where it was imported in the famous collection of Bidpai's Fables. We here reproduce a reduced fac-simile of an old German print, published in the year 1483 in Ulm by L. Halle.

 In sollicher mensch würdt recht gegleicht ain man
der foch einen lewen der yn iagt / vnd kam zu ainem
dieffen brünnen vñ ließ sich dar ein vnd hüß sich mit
seinen henden an zway claine reifen. So bei ende deß galbrün
nen gewachsen warend / vnd sein fuß satz er auff ain walzen

den stain/vnd sach vor ym her gan vier tiere die mit geduckten haubten vnd yn begertn züuerschlinden/vnd da er sein gesicht von ynen zü tal köte da sach er ainen greuselichen trachen mit auff getanem münd vnder ym im gründe des brünnen/berait yn in seinen giel zü enpfachen/vnd nam war das bei den zwai en reisen daran er sich hüß ain schwarze vnd ain weisse mauß waren die ab zenagen nach irem vermügen. Dieser mensch da er in so grossen engsten stünd vnd nit west wann sein end was da ersach er neben ym zwüschen zwai en stainen ein wenig hö/nigßams/dauon leckt er mit seiner züngen/vnd durch entpfingung der clainen süßigkait vergaß er ym selber für zü sehen wy er von seiner angst geledigt werden möcht biß das er viele vnd verdarb. Ich gleich den brünnen diser welt/die vier tiere die vier element von den alle menschen züm tod gefordert werden/die zwai reiß das leben des menschen/die weiß mauß den tag/die schwarz mauß die nacht die sterz das leben des menschen ab nagent/durch den trachen das grab des menschen das sein alle stund wartet das wenig hö/nigßam der zergengtlich wollust diser welt durch den sich manig mensch in ewige vnruw versenckt.

A picture illustrating the story accompanies the German text, which reads in English as follows :

"Such a man (viz., a worldly man living for pleasure) should be compared to a man who has fled before a lion that is chasing him, and has come to a deep well and laid himself down and clung with his hands to two little twigs on the edge of the well. Here, resting his feet upon a round stone, he saw before him four animals with lowered heads, eager to devour him. And when he turned his face away from them and looked down he saw a horrible dragon with gaping mouth under him at the bottom of the well, ready to receive him in his jaws, and he perceived that at the twigs to which he clung there were two mice one black and one white who gnawed at them with all their might. As he stood in such great fear not knowing when his end



As he stood in such great fear not knowing when his end

would come, he saw near him between two stones a little honey which he licked with his tongue, and in the sensation of that little sweetness he forgot to give heed as to how he might be released before he should fall and perish. I liken the well to this world: the four animals to the four elements who have a claim on all men until death. The two twigs are the life of man. The white mouse is day and the black mouse is night, who are constantly gnawing at man's life. The dragon is the grave of man that all the while is awaiting him. The little honey is the lust of this world through which many a man sinks into eternal unrest."

The points in which the two forms of the parable differ are very trivial in comparison with their similarities.¹

¹For the history of Bidpai's Fables, the migration of which has been closely traced, see Dr. Ernst Kuhn's essay in the *Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1893); also Joseph Jacob's *Bidpai's Fables* and *Barlaam and Josaphat*.